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Business France

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PRESS RELEASE

Eighth edition of the "Choose France" Awards:

B. Braun, Envision, Smurfit Westrock and Tekever chosen

In the États de France annual business and economic forum for foreign multinationals, Business France distinguished four international businesses that are transforming the French economy and reindustrializing its regions.

From innovation, decarbonization, regions and sovereignty, the winners of the 2026 "Choose France" awards illustrated the realization of the investment decisions announced at "Choose France" into the everyday life of France's regions.

Organized by Business France under the aegis of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for the Economy, Finance and Industrial, Energy and Digital Sovereignty, as well as the Ministry for Regional Development and Decentralization, and in collaboration with the États de France, the "Choose France" Awards highlighted foreign investments that contribute to the economic dynamism of the country and its regions.

The eighth edition in 2026 recognized four international firms whose projects have been particularly impactful. This year, the jury, comprising institutional representatives and business experts and chaired by Pascal Cagni, Ambassador for International Investment and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Business France, selected four businesses that have contributed to France's influence and attractiveness.

The four 2026 award categories were Technological Innovation, Decarbonization, Commitment to Regions & Talent and, for the first time, Sovereignty. This new award category recognizes projects that strengthen a strategic sector and reduce external dependencies, as well as consolidating French and European industrial capabilities.

The winners:

Choose France Award "Technological Innovation" – B. Braun (Germany).

Based in France with five R&D and production sites, all with a global reach, the German medical technology group B. Braun employs 2,000 people in France and exports 80% of its output. The "Choose France" 2021 and 2026 announcements amounted to €36 million in cumulative investments and 45 additional hires: an initial investment enabled the start-up at the end of 2023 of production lines in Nogent-le-Rotrou (Centre-Val de Loire) and Sarlat (Nouvelle Aquitaine), including a European benchmark production line for microsurgical

needles using laser technology. Nearly €20 million is now committed to Chasseneuil-du-Poitou (Nouvelle Aquitaine) for increased production of implantable ports, particularly in oncology.

These investments strengthen the healthcare sector in both the Centre-Val de Loire and Nouvelle-Aquitaine regions, while Nogent-le-Rotrou and Sarlat are located in “France Rural Revitalization” areas, identified as priorities by the French State.

Choose France “Decarbonization” Prize – Envision (China)

In Douai (Hauts de France region), Envision AESC is making a total investment of €1.3 billion and creating nearly 1,200 jobs. The first phase of the battery gigafactory, with a total capacity of 10 GWh, was inaugurated in June 2025; cumulative cell production reached 10 million units in October 2026. These cells notably equip the Renault 4 and 5 electric vehicles produced by ElectriCity.

This facility anchors a strategic battery value chain in the Hauts de France region, supports the decarbonization of mobility and creates sustainable industrial activity in the Grand-Hainaut Douaisis Cambrésis area (Hauts de France), a designated industrial territory, where the city of Douai is classified by the French government as a high-priority municipality.

Choose France Award “Regions & talents” – Smurfit Westrock (Ireland)

With 50 production sites and more than 6,000 employees in France, the Irish specialist in sustainable paper-based packaging has a presence in every French region, where it is implementing an ambitious industrial modernization program. Having already invested a sum of €500 million, the group plans to invest an additional €600 million over the next three years to decarbonize its operations, improve production efficiency and strengthen its recyclable packaging production capacity.

The expansion and modernization of the Épernay site (Grand Est region), the installation of an evaporation unit at the Facture paper mill (Nouvelle Aquitaine) and the continued development of the corrugated cardboard plant in Vernon (Normandie) are all tangible examples of this commitment. Through these investments, the Smurfit Westrock group is contributing to maintaining essential skills and expertise in local areas, while supporting a key sector for France’s ecological transition.

Choose France “Sovereignty” Award – Tekever (Portugal)

Operating in Toulouse (Occitanie region) since 2024, the Portuguese company Tekever has established a final assembly line for civilian and military drones in Cahors (Occitanie) in less than two years, on a 4,500 sq. m. site.

The “Choose France” 2025 and 2026 announcements bring the total commitment to €200 million and 200 jobs created, to develop engineering, R&D, assembly, integration and testing capabilities for autonomous systems in France; in Cahors, these investments contribute to creating skilled jobs and structuring partnerships with the national defense ecosystem, as well as strengthening French and European technological autonomy.

Business France, working alongside local communities. From the initial announcement to the commissioning of projects, Business France supports foreign investors in defining, locating and implementing their projects in France. In conjunction with the national government, regional authorities and all members of Team France Invest, the agency mobilizes relevant expertise and facilitates communication with local stakeholders, helping to transform investment decisions into factories, R&D centers, jobs and lasting economic benefits that are closely aligned with local communities.

“The ‘Choose France’ Awards celebrate foreign businesses that have made a bold choice to invest in France. Through their investments, innovations and the jobs they create in our regions, they demonstrate that our country has all the key strengths to welcome and nurture ambitious international projects. These successes are the best illustration of the dynamic nature of ‘Choose France’,” said **Pascal Cagni, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Business France.**

“Behind each winning project lies a decision to invest, but also a new location, an expansion, jobs and new industrial or technological capabilities in our regions. Business France’s role is to support investors from their initial planning stages to the concrete realization of their projects. These awards illustrate an attractiveness that translates very tangibly on the ground,” said **Guillaume Basset, Chief Operating Officer of Business France’s Investment Division.**

About Business France:

Business France is the public consulting business serving the international development of the French economy. It is responsible for fostering export-led growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating foreign investment in France.

It promotes France’s firms, business image and nationwide attractiveness as an investment location, and also runs the V.I.E international internship program, which connects businesses with young talent for international assignments.

Business France has more than 1,400 personnel, both in France and in 53 countries throughout the world.

In 2025, support from Business France made it possible to generate €2.5 billion in additional export revenues for French SMEs and mid-size companies, accounting for more than 25,386 jobs created or planned. Business France supported 59% of the 1,878 foreign investment decisions in 2025, accounting for 35,426 jobs projected nationwide by foreign businesses.

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